

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATION

UPLAND WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

(Acre)

Code 645

GENERAL SPECIFICATION

Procedures, technical details and other information listed below provides additional guidance for carrying out selected components of the named practice. This material is referenced from the conservation practice standard for Upland Wildlife Habitat Management and supplements the requirements and considerations listed therein.

PURPOSE

To provide food, cover, water, arrange habitat elements in proper amounts and locations and/or manage wildlife habitat to achieve a viable wildlife population within the species home range.

HABITAT

Wildlife habitat can be any land type and even manmade structures such as buildings, bridges, towers, etc, which provide needed life requirements.

Plains, forests, riparian, wetlands, grasslands, rock outcrops, cliffs, in New Mexico provide a variety of habitats for wildlife. Different species of wildlife take advantage of seral stages. Some species such as owls require old growth forests for nest sites. Others species need early stages of weeds for food. While yet others nest in the mature ecosystem and feed in weed patches. Generally, more diversity in the habitat is better for wildlife.

Artificial structures may be used to supplement natural habitats if indicated by the habitat evaluation. Nest boxes, houses, or other suitable permanent artificial structures may be used to fulfill species habitat requirements.

The Quality Criteria in the FOTG, Section III indicates the level of habitat quality for Animals – Wildlife.

The type and amount of food, cover, water, interspersions of habitats are all covered when the habitat is evaluated. The low scores indicate the elements, which should be strengthened.

Migration of wildlife is an annual phenomenon. Groups of song birds known as neo-tropical migrants nest and raise young throughout New Mexico in the spring and summer each year. In the fall they leave to fly south for the winter. The major rivers such as the Rio Grande and Pecos are travel corridors for these birds. Major mountain ranges are also used as migration routes and include the Sandia and Manzano mountains, Black range and Gila Mountains.

Correspondingly, the migration of waterfowl and shorebirds occurs each year with these groups spending the fall and winter in the state. Ducks, geese and cranes are common sights in the Rio Grande valley during the winter. Many upland farm fields are used as resting areas and food sources and are of importance during this time. The quality of food must be adequate to provide energy and nutrients for winter maintenance and spring breeding condition.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications shall be prepared in accordance with the criteria of the standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended use. Plans and specifications shall be developed for the specific field site. Plans and specifications may include engineering plans, job sheets, technical guides or narrative statements in conservation plans. Other applicable practice standards should be used when appropriate, i.e., conservation cover,

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

brush management and tree planting, etc. to meet identified habitat deficiencies or facilitate habitat improvement.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Actions will be carried out to ensure that this practice functions as intended throughout its expected life. These actions include normal repetitive activities in the application and use of the practice (operation) such as prescribed fire or

mowing, and repair and upkeep of the practice (maintenance) such as replacement of dead trees or shrubs. This is a management practice, which provides for management as well as structural items to maintain, improve and enhance habitat for wildlife. Management may need to be adjusted periodically to accomplish the intended goals.

REFERENCES